

What is claimed is:

CLAIMS

1. A method for providing a personalized multimedia messaging service (MMS), the method comprising:
 - 5 obtaining an MMS message;
 - applying personalized metadata to the MMS message for at least one targeted recipient according to preferences of the at least one targeted recipient, thereby producing a personalized MMS message; and
 - 10 transmitting the personalized MMS message to the at least one targeted recipient, unless the preferences of the at least one targeted recipient indicate that the at least one targeted recipient is not interested in receiving the personalized MMS message.
- 15 2. The method according to claim 1 and wherein the preferences of the at least one targeted recipient comprise preferences related to content.
3. The method according to claim 1 or claim 2 and wherein the MMS message comprises at least one of the following: content; at least one link to content; and at least one pointer to content.
- 20 4. The method according to claim 3 and wherein said content comprises at least one of the following: text; video; a stills image; audio; a software attachment; and bundled multimedia.
- 25 5. The method according to claim 4 and wherein the bundled multimedia comprises at least one of the following: pop-up multimedia; and animated multimedia.
- 30 6. The method according to claim 4 and wherein the bundled multimedia comprises at least one of the following: ShockwaveTM multimedia;

Flash™ multimedia; a synchronized multimedia integration language (SMIL) file; and a simple animation format (SAF) file.

7. The method according to claim 1 or claim 2 and wherein said
5 personalized metadata comprises at least one indicator of at least one of the following: a creator of the MMS message; a provider of at least some content comprised in or associated with the MMS message; an MMS message title keyword; sponsorship of at least some content comprised in or associated with the MMS message; cost of at least some content comprised in or associated with the
10 MMS message; a category in the MMS message; a rating of the MMS message; a duration of at least some content comprised in or associated with the MMS message; a creation time of the MMS message; a validity period of the MMS message; a genre of the MMS message; details of a performer performing in at least some content comprised in or associated with the MMS message; and a type
15 of content comprised in or associated with the MMS message.

8. The method according to claim 1 or claim 2 and wherein the obtaining comprises obtaining the MMS message from at least one of the following: a content provider; and a user.

20 9. The method according to claim 1 or claim 2 and wherein the personalized metadata comprises metadata determining a personalized format of presentation of the MMS message.

25 10. The method according to claim 9 and wherein the personalized format of presentation of the MMS message comprises at least one of the following: a personalized icon based format; and a personalized menu based format.

30 11. The method according to claim 1 or claim 2 and also comprising receiving the personalized MMS message at a communication appliance of the at least one targeted recipient.

12. The method according to claim 11 and wherein the communication appliance comprises at least one of the following: a cellular telephone; a portable communication device; a personal digital assistant (PDA); a computer based device with input/output (I/O) capabilities; a set-top box (STB); and MMS message reception and display equipment.

13. A method for providing a personalized multimedia messaging service (MMS), the method comprising:
10 receiving at a first communication appliance of a first user an MMS message personalized in accordance with preferences of the first user; and
transmitting from the first communication appliance a request to transmit the MMS message to a second communication appliance of a second user.

15 14. The method according to claim 13 and also comprising:
receiving at the second communication appliance, in response to the transmitting, the MMS message personalized in accordance with preferences of the second user.

20 15. The method according to claim 14 and wherein the preferences of the second user comprise preferences related to content.

16. The method according to any of claims 13 - 15 and wherein the preferences of the first user comprise preferences related to content.

25 17. The method according to any of claims 13 - 15 and wherein the transmitting comprises transmitting the request to an MMS message dispatcher system.

30 18. The method according to any of claims 13 - 15 and wherein the MMS message comprises at least one of the following: content; at least one link to content; and at least one pointer to content.

19. The method according to claim 18 and wherein said content comprises at least one of the following: text; video; a stills image; audio; a software attachment; and bundled multimedia.

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20. The method according to claim 19 and wherein the bundled multimedia comprises at least one of the following: pop-up multimedia; and animated multimedia.

10 21. The method according to claim 19 and wherein the bundled multimedia comprises at least one of the following: Shockwave™ multimedia; Flash™ multimedia; a SMIL file; and a SAF file.

15 22. The method according to any of claims 13 - 15 and wherein each of the first communication appliance and the second communication appliance comprises at least one of the following: a cellular telephone; a portable communication device; a PDA; a computer based device with I/O capabilities; an STB; and MMS message reception and display equipment.

20 23. A method for employing a personalized MMS message, the method comprising:

receiving the personalized MMS message;
processing personalized metadata associated with the personalized MMS message to generate personalized parameters determining a format of presentation of at least a portion of content comprised in or associated with the personalized MMS message; and
using the personalized parameters in an electronic content guide (ECG).

30 24. The method according to claim 23 and wherein the using comprises employing at least some of the personalized parameters to create a personalized structure of the ECG.

25. The method according to claim 23 or claim 24 and also comprising enabling a user to view the at least a portion of content comprised in or associated with the personalized MMS message in response to an indication of agreement by 5 the user to pay for viewing the at least a portion of content.

26. The method according to claim 23 or claim 24 and also comprising enabling a user to listen to the at least a portion of content comprised in or associated with the personalized MMS message in response to an indication of 10 agreement by the user to pay for listening to the at least a portion of content.

27. The method according to claim 23 or claim 24 and wherein said format of presentation comprises at least one of the following: an icon based format; and a menu based format.

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28. The method according to claim 23 or claim 24 and wherein said format of presentation comprises a format of presentation adapted for performance of selections from the at least a portion of content comprised in or associated with the personalized MMS message.

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29. An MMS message dispatcher system comprising:
a dispatcher processor obtaining an MMS message, and applying personalized metadata to the MMS message for at least one targeted recipient according to preferences of the at least one targeted recipient, thereby producing a 25 personalized MMS message; and
a dispatcher transmitter operatively controlled by the dispatcher processor to transmit the personalized MMS message to the at least one targeted recipient, unless the preferences of the at least one targeted recipient indicate that the at least one targeted recipient is not interested in receiving the personalized 30 MMS message.

30. The dispatcher system according to claim 29 and wherein the preferences of the at least one targeted recipient comprise preferences related to content.

5 31. The dispatcher system according to claim 29 or claim 30 and wherein the MMS message is created by at least one of the following: a content provider; and a user.

10 32. The dispatcher system according to claim 29 or claim 30 and also comprising a user preference database storing the preferences of the at least one targeted recipient.

33. The dispatcher system according to claim 29 or claim 30 and wherein the dispatcher transmitter comprises a cellular telephone transmitter.

15 34. A mobile operator base station comprising the dispatcher system of claim 29 or claim 30.

20 35. Apparatus for employing a personalized MMS message, the apparatus comprising:

a receiver receiving an MMS message personalized in accordance with preferences of a first user; and

a transmitter transmitting a request to transmit the MMS message to a communication appliance of a second user.

25 36. An MMS system comprising:
a first communication appliance of a first user;
a second communication appliance of a second user; and
an MMS message dispatcher system operative to perform the
30 following operations:

transmit to the first communication appliance an MMS message personalized in accordance with preferences of the first user;

receive from the first communication appliance a request to transmit the MMS message to the second communication appliance; and

transmit to the second communication appliance the MMS message personalized in accordance with preferences of the second user.

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37. Apparatus for employing a personalized MMS message, the apparatus comprising:

a receiving element receiving the personalized MMS message; and

a processor processing personalized metadata associated with the

10 personalized MMS message to generate personalized parameters determining a format of presentation of at least a portion of content comprised in or associated with the personalized MMS message, and using the personalized parameters in an ECG.

15 38. A cellular telephone comprising the apparatus of claim 37.

39. A set-top box (STB) comprising the apparatus of claim 37.